

## Message Text

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INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-07 L-03  
NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06  
ACDA-07 IO-13 EB-08 NRC-05 OES-07 FEAE-00 ERDA-05  
MC-02 /106 W

-----116151 281628Z /42

R 281401Z JUL 77  
FM AMEMBASSY PARIS  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6314  
INFO USMISSION NATO  
AMEMBASSY ROME  
AMEMBASSY MADRID  
AMEMBASSY BONN  
AMEMBASSY LONDON  
DIA WASHDC  
SECDEF WASHDC  
USNMR SHAPE  
USCINCEUR

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 3 PARIS 21872

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PINT FR MILI  
SUBJ: THE UNION OF THE LEFT AND THE FRENCH NUCLEAR FORCE

SUMMARY: SPEAKING PUBLICLY FOR THE FIRST TIME THIS YEAR  
JULY 26 ON THE SUBJECT OF THE FRENCH NUCLEAR FORCE,  
SOCIALIST (PS) FIRST SECRETARY MITTERRAND ATTEMPTED  
TO STRIKE A BALANCE BETWEEN THE REQUIREMENTS OF IDEO-  
LOGICAL PURITY AND RESPONSIBLE PRAGMATISM. NOTING AS  
A GENERAL PRINCIPLE THAT THE PS WOULD NEVER GO BACK ON  
ITS DECISION TO RENOUNCE THE BOMB, HE ARGUED IN THE  
SHORT-TERM FOR MAINTENANCE OF THE NUCLEAR FORCE IN ITS  
PRESENT STATE WHILE SEEKING MULTILATERAL DISARMAMENT  
WHICH WOULD RENDER IT UNNECESSARY. HE ADDED, HOWEVER,  
IN AN IDEA TAKEN BY MANY AS A SIGN OF IRRESOLUTION AND  
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UNCERTAINTY, THAT THE FRENCH PEOPLE AS A WHOLE SHOULD  
MAKE THE FINAL DECISION, PROBABLY THROUGH A REFERENDUM.  
SPEAKING AGAIN JULY 27, MITTERRAND RETREATED SOMEWHAT  
FROM HIS REFERENDUM PROPOSAL, AGREEING IT WOULD REQUIRE  
A CONSTITUTIONAL CHANGE, AND WENT FURTHER IN EXPRESSING  
HIS DOUBTS ON THE DETERRENT VALUE OF THE NUCLEAR FORCE,  
PARTICULARLY OUTSIDE OF "OTHER ARRANGEMENTS" (READ NATO).

TOTAL DEFENSE AUTONOMY, BASED SOLELY ON THE NUCLEAR DETERRENT, WOULD RESULT, SAID MITTERRAND, IN A "NUCLEAR MAGINOT LINE." MITTERRAND'S REMARKS FOLLOWING CLOSELY ON THE HEELS OF PS CRITICISM OF COMMUNIST (PCF) DEFENSE PROPOSALS, CRITICISM WHICH PROVIDED A FORCEFUL REAFFIRMATION OF SOCIALIST COMMITMENT TO THE EXISTING ALLIANCE STRUCTURE. END SUMMARY.

1. THE DEFENSE DEBATE: THE MAY 11 PCF PUBLICATION OF ITS OFFICIAL "REVISED" DEFENSE DOCTRINE (PARIS 14131), MOST NOTABLY ACCEPTING THE CONTINUED EXISTENCE UNDER A LEFT GOVERNMENT OF THE FRENCH NUCLEAR FORCE (FORCE DE FRAPPE), WAS GENERALLY HAILED AS ANOTHER EXAMPLE OF COMMUNIST EVOLUTION WHICH WOULD ELIMINATE A POTENTIAL BONE OF CONTENTION FOR THE UNITED LEFT. HOWEVER, WHEREAS THE MAJOR PCF PROPOSITIONS SEEMED TO FIT MORE CLOSELY WITH AN EVOLVING PS POSITION ON MAINTAINING THE FORCE IN THE NEAR-TERM, THE ASSOCIATED PCF DEMAND FOR TARGETING THIS FORCE "TOUS AZIMUTS" SUGGESTED A POLICY SETTING FRANCE FURTHER APART FROM THE NATO STRUCTURE AND, IN THE EYES OF MANY PS LEADERS, ADVOCATING A FORM OF NEUTRALISM AND EXCESSIVE AUTARCHY. PCF IDEAS IN MAY INCLUDED:

--"OMNIDIRECTIONAL" (TOUS AZIMUTS) TARGETING TO REPLACE THE CURRENT SYSTEM AIMED SOLELY AGAINST SOCIALIST COUNTRIES;  
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--FULLY INDEPENDENT EARLY WARNING CAPABILITY, INCLUDING AIRBORNE RADAR PLATFORMS AS WELL AS RECONNAISSANCE SATELLITES;

--RENUNCIATION OF THE FIRST USE OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS AND EMPLOYMENT ONLY IN DEFENSE OF THE NATIONAL TERRITORY.

NOW, IN JULY, NOT ONLY DO THESE LATTER COMMUNIST CONCEPTS SEEM TO THREATEN AN ALLIANCE SYSTEM WHICH THE PS IS PLEDGED TO MAINTAIN, BUT EVEN THE APPARENT AGREEMENT OF PCF AND PS ON THE LARGER QUESTION OF MAINTENANCE OF THE FORCE ITSELF IS PROVING DIFFICULT TO PUT ON PAPER.

2. THE BIG ISSUE....: THE DETAILED DISCUSSIONS BEGAN THE WEEK OF JULY 18-22 IN THE CONTEXT OF UPDATING DEFENSE PORTIONS OF THE COMMON PROGRAM SEEM NOT TO HAVE PROVIDED SATISFACTORY ANSWERS TO PS CONCERNS OVER COMMUNIST INTENTIONS WITH REGARD TO THE ALLIANCE STRUCTURE (IT IS CERTAIN HOWEVER THAT PS CRITICISMS ARE IN PART A CONVENIENT SMOKE SCREEN TO HIDE SOCIALIST INDECISION ON THE LARGER ISSUE OF MAINTENANCE OR RENUNCIATION). PS SPOKESMAN AND NEGOTIATOR PIERRE

BEREGOVVOY SAID JULY 23, FOLLOWING A MEETING OF THE

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 3 PARIS 21872

SOCIALIST DIRECTING COMMITTEE, THAT ACCEPTANCE OF THE  
"MAINTENANCE" CONCEPT MUST NOT LEAD, EITHER DIRECTLY OR  
INDIRECTLY, TO A CHANGE IN THE BASIC TENETS OF LEFT  
FOREIGN POLICY AND MOST IMPORTANTLY MUST NOT THREATEN  
THE CURRENT ALLIANCE SYSTEM. (HE ADDED THAT  
SUPPORT FOR THE STATUS QUO MEANS OPPOSITION TO FURTHER  
INTEGRATION INTO NATO AS WELL AS HOSTILITY TO FURTHER  
SEPARATION.)

3. AND SOME DETAILS: THE PS HAS ALSO CRITICIZED  
INDIVIDUAL ASPECTS OF PCF STRATEGY, POINTING OUT FOR  
EXAMPLE THE REDUCED CREDIBILITY OF A SMALL NUCLEAR FORCE  
TARGETED "ALL AZIMUTHS," THE PROHIBITIVE COSTS OF  
INDEPENDENT EARLY WARNING SYSTEMS, AND THE DEGRADATION  
OF THE NADGE SYSTEM AS A RESULT OF FRENCH WITHDRAWAL.  
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THE SOCIALISTS CONTINUE TO CRITICIZE AS WELL THE PCF POSITION ON RENUNCIATION OF FIRST USE, ARGUING THAT SUCH A PRONOUNCEMENT, IN THE FACE OF VASTLY PREDOMINANT WARSAW PACT CONVENTIONAL FORCES, WOULD ROB THE NUCLEAR FORCE OF ALL DETERRENT EFFECT. THE PS IS ALSO CLEARLY ON RECORD IN OPPOSITION TO ONE OF THE COMMUNISTS' MORE NOVEL PROPOSALS, CALLING "IMPRACTICAL" THE SYSTEM OF "COLLEGIAL RESPONSIBILITY" FOR DECIDING TO LAUNCH THE FORCE.

4. PCF RESPONSE: THE COMMUNIST REACTION WAS RELATIVELY MILD, PERHAPS INDICATING AN ULTIMATE DESIRE TO SETTLE THIS QUESTION AMICABLY. PCF "FOREIGN MINISTER" JEAN KANAPA SAID JULY 25 THAT "NEUTRALITY WAS CERTAINLY NOT A SUITABLE POLICY FOR FRANCE," BUT CHOSE TO ARGUE HIS CASE SOLELY ON THE QUESTION OF WHETHER OR NOT TO MAINTAIN THE NUCLEAR FORCE, THUS IGNORING THE TRUE THRUST OF PS CHARGES. IN BASING HIS CASE AS USUAL ON THE BASTION OF NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE, KANAPA NOTED THAT TO DEPRIVE THE COUNTRY OF ITS ONLY DETERRENT FORCE WOULD QUICKLY PLACE IT UNDER THE "AMERICAN UMBRELLA," ADDING THAT "WE DON'T WANT TO BE A PROTECTORATE."

5. PS INDECISION: IN FACT, ALTHOUGH THE PCF IS ARGUING ORANGES TO THE PS' APPLES, THE COMMUNISTS ARE PROBABLY FOCUSED ON WHAT WILL PROVE TO BE THE MOST IMPORTANT AND DIFFICULT QUESTION--THE QUESTION OF MAINTENANCE ITSELF. ALTHOUGH THE PCF MAY EVENTUALLY ABANDON ITS INSISTENCE ON "ALL AZIMUTHS," COLLEGIAL RESPONSIBILITY, INDEPENDENT EARLY WARNING AND THE LIKE, IT WILL BE A GREAT DEAL HARDER TO ACCEPT A FINAL DOCUMENT WHICH SAYS NOTHING ON THE LARGER QUESTION OF MAINTAINING THE NUCLEAR FORCE. (PCF SPOKESMEN HAVE CALLED SUCH A CONFIDENTIAL

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POSSIBILITY "INCONCEIVABLE," ADDING THAT A SERIOUS AND CREDIBLE AGREEMENT IS IMPOSSIBLE WITHOUT A CLEAR ENGAGEMENT ON THE DEFENSE QUESTION.) IT IS EXACTLY THAT QUESTION, HOWEVER, WHICH THE PS IS UNABLE TO ANSWER OFFICIALLY TODAY AND WHICH IT APPARENTLY WILL NOT ADDRESS DEFINITELY UNTIL A SPECIAL PARTY CONVENTION ON DECEMBER 11.

6. MITTERRAND SPEAKS: THE SOCIALIST SOLUTION FOR THE SHORT-TERM FINALLY SHOWED ITSELF IN A FRANCOIS MITTERRAND INTERVIEW PUBLISHED JULY 26. SILENT THIS YEAR UNTIL NOW, APPARENTLY EVEN IN PRIVATE, MITTERRAND'S POSITION IS NOT UNEXPECTED AND OBVIOUSLY SHOULD CARRY THE DAY IN

DECEMBER, ALBEIT AFTER SOME ACRIMONIOUS DEBATE.  
(MITTERRAND WILL BE OPPOSED BY VARIOUS GROUPS, MOST  
NOTABLY THAT LED BY NATIONAL SECRETARY FOR CULTURAL  
AFFAIRS, DOMINIQUE TADDEI, WHO ARGUES THAT THE NUCLEAR  
FORCE IS NEITHER DEMOCRATIC NOR EFFECTIVE.) MITTERRAND  
FAVORS MAINTAINING THE NUCLEAR FORCE IN ITS PRESENT  
STATE (I.E., NO FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OR MODIFICATION)  
WHILE SEEKING MULTILATERAL DISARMAMENT WHICH WOULD  
RENDER SUCH FORCES UNNECESSARY. (THE PCF CONCEPT OF  
"MAINTENANCE" DIFFERS IN THAT IT INCLUDES TECHNOLOGICAL  
UPGRADING OF THE FORCE AS REQUIRED TO MAINTAIN ITS  
CURRENT LEVEL OF CAPABILITY.) STICKING TO THE IDEO-  
LOGICAL HIGHGROUND IN PROCLAIMING THAT THE SOCIALISTS  
WOULD NEVER GO BACK ON THEIR RENUNCIATION OF THE ATOMIC  
BOMB, MITTERRAND CONCLUDED THAT THE FINAL DECISION IS  
ONE FOR THE FRENCH PEOPLE AND ONE WHICH COULD BE HANDLED  
THROUGH A NATIONAL REFERENDUM (AS COULD THE ISSUE OF  
NUCLEAR ENERGY FOR CIVIL PURPOSES).

7. THE REFERENDUM QUESTION: MITTERRAND'S PROPOSAL FOR

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 3 OF 3 PARIS 21872

A REFERENDUM MET WITH IMMEDIATE CRITICISM ON A NUMBER

OF FRONTS, MOST NOTABLY AS IT OPENED THE FIRST SECRETARY TO CHARGES OF INDECISIVENESS AND EXPOSED A SERIOUS UNCERTAINTY IN SOCIALIST PLANS. DEFENSE MINISTER BOURGES BEGAN HIS ATTACK ON MITTERRAND'S PLAN BY CALLING SUCH A REFERENDUM UNCONSTITUTIONAL, AND IN FACT, MITTERRAND LATER ADMITTED THAT A CONSTITUTIONAL CHANGE WOULD BE REQUIRED. BUT THE MOST SERIOUS ARGUMENTS FOCUS ON MITTERRAND'S APPARENT ABDICATION OF RESPONSIBILITY ON A QUESTION OF CAPITAL IMPORTANCE. FOR THE MOMENT, HOWEVER, HE HAS LITTLE ALTERNATIVE, GIVEN THE SERIOUS DIVISION WITHIN THE PS. HE WOULD LIKE TO HOLD THE DOOR OPEN FOR THE FUTURE:

--FIRST, BY CONTINUING WITH THE LANGUAGE OF THE CURRENT COMMON PROGRAM WHICH, IN RENOUNCING THE BOMB, CONFIDENTIAL

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REMAINS VALID ON THE PURELY IDEOLOGICAL LEVEL (FOR BOTH PS AND PCF);

--SECOND, BY STRIKING A MORE PRAGMATIC SHORT-TERM STANCE IN FAVOR OF TEMPORARY RETENTION OF THE FORCE IN AN IMPERFECT WORLD. THE REFERENDUM WRINKLE SEEMS LIKELY TO PROVE TO BE AN EXCESS OF FLEXIBILITY, CARRYING THE PS LEADER'S CHERISHED "ARTISTIC FUZZINESS" TO NEW AND COUNTERPRODUCTIVE HEIGHTS.

8. A NUCLEAR MAGINOT LINE: SPEAKING JULY 27, MITTERRAND CARRIED THE DEBATE ONTO NEW GROUND BY QUESTIONING THE DETERRENT CAPACITY OF THE FRENCH FORCE, PARTICULARLY IN AN AUTONOMOUS ROLE OUTSIDE OF OTHER "ARRANGEMENTS," MEANING THE ALLIANCE SYSTEM. IN SO DOING, HE HAS CHALLENGED THE COMMUNISTS ON TWO IMPORTANT FRONTS:

--SINCE MAY 11, THE PCF HAS CALLED THE NUCLEAR FORCE THE SOLE EFFECTIVE DETERRENT, IN THE ABSENCE OF CREDIBLE CONVENTIONAL FORCES;

--IF THE NUCLEAR FORCE IS NOT SUFFICIENT TO ASSURE FRENCH SECURITY, THE ONLY AVAILABLE SOLUTION WOULD SEEM TO BE A TIGHTENING OF THE NATO RELATIONSHIP. ALTHOUGH HE SPEAKS NOW AS "JUST ANOTHER PARTY MEMBER," IT WOULD SEEM NEARLY CERTAIN THAT MITTERRAND CAN BRING THE PS ALONG AT THE DECEMBER CONVENTION; IT IS LESS CERTAIN WITH EACH PASSING DAY, BUT STILL A GOOD BET, THAT HE CAN BRING THE PCF ALONG IN SEPTEMBER. IN ANY CASE, THE DEBATE OF THE LAST WEEK HAS FOCUSED THE PUBLIC EYE ONCE AGAIN ON THE PS COMMITMENT TO THE EXISTING ALLIANCE SYSTEM. THE FINAL RESULTS OF THAT DEBATE SHOULD ALSO DEMONSTRATE WHO CALLS THE FINAL SHOTS ON DEFENSE IN THE UNION OF THE LEFT.

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## Message Attributes

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JULY 26 ON THE SUBJECT OF THE FRENCH NUCL EAR FORCE  
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